

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated in the following listing of all claims:

Claims 1-10 (Canceled)

11. (*Amended*) A method for authenticating a first user for a data transaction between the first user and a second user wherein the second user has identified the first user, the method comprising:

responsive to identification of the first user by the second user and prior to creation of an account for the first user, sending a first message to the first user ~~as identified by the second user~~;

in a session with the first user in response to the message, receiving user account information from the first user; and

sending a second message to the first user ~~as identified by the second user~~ wherein the second message informs the first user regarding creation of a user account in accordance with the received user account information.

Claims 12-39 (Canceled)

40. (*New*) The method of claim 11, wherein the first message includes a first resource locator by which the first user initiates the session.

41. (*New*) The method of claim 11, further comprising: authenticating identity of the first user based at least in part on the received user account information and thereafter initiating the data transaction.

42. (*New*) The method of claim 11, wherein the second message includes a second resource locator by which the first user may retrieve information of the data transaction.

43. (*New*) A method of securely directing private information to a recipient via a messaging system, the method comprising:  
transmitting a first message to the recipient, the first message including a recipient-specific resource locator; and  
responsive to a retrieval using the recipient-specific resource locator, authenticating identity of the recipient and thereafter supplying the private information to the recipient.
44. (*New*) The method of claim 43,  
wherein, prior to transmission of the first message, the recipient has not been enrolled for access to the private information.
45. (*New*) The method of claim 43, further comprising:  
enrolling the recipient for subsequent access to private information after identity of the recipient has been authenticated.
46. (*New*) The method of claim 43,  
wherein the supplying includes transmitting a second message that verifies enrollment of the recipient and includes a second resource locator by which the recipient may retrieve the private information.
47. (*New*) The method of claim 43,  
wherein the supplying includes delivering the private information in response to a retrieval by the authenticated recipient.
48. (*New*) The method of claim 43, further comprising:  
prior to the transmitting of the first message, receiving from a sender of the private information at least one criterion for authenticating identity of the recipient.

49. *(New)* The method of claim 48,  
wherein the criterion identifies a type of authentication information for verification  
against a third-party information service, but does not specify the particular  
information with which identity of the recipient is to be authenticated; and  
wherein the authenticating includes verifying information received from the recipient  
using the third-party information service.
50. *(New)* The method of claim 49,  
wherein the third-party information service includes a credit card authorization server.
51. *(New)* The method of claim 49, further comprising:  
communicating at least some of the information received from the recipient to the third-  
party information service; and  
receiving verification from the third-party information service.
52. *(New)* The method of claim 48,  
wherein the criterion specifies authentication information known, or separately  
communicated to, the intended recipient but generally unknown to others; and  
wherein the authenticating includes verifying information received from the recipient  
against the authentication information received from the sender.
53. *(New)* The method of claim 43,  
wherein the first message is an e-mail message;  
wherein the private information includes a document encoding; and  
wherein the resource locator includes an URL and the authenticating is performed using a  
dialog that is at least initiated using content supplied to the recipient based on the  
URL.
54. *(New)* A computer program product comprising and encoding:  
a first functional sequence executable in a secure messaging system to transmit a first  
message to a recipient not previously enrolled in the secure messaging system,  
wherein the first message includes a recipient-specific resource locator;

a second functional sequence executable in the secure messaging system to service a session initiated by the recipient using the recipient-specific resource locator and to authenticate identity of the recipient; and

a third functional sequence executable in the secure messaging system to supply the private information after successful authentication of the recipient.

55. (*New*) The computer program product of claim 54, wherein the first, second and third functional sequences are executable in a networked computing environment as a delivery server.

56. (*New*) The computer program product of claim 54, further comprising: a fourth functional sequence executable in the secure messaging system to receive from a sender both the private information for delivery to the recipient and at least one criterion for authenticating identity of the recipient.

57. (*New*) The computer program product of claim 54, further comprising: a fifth functional sequence executable in the secure messaging system to communicate with a third-party information service capable of verifying information received from the recipient in support of the authenticating.

58. (*New*) The computer program product of claim 54, encoded in at least one computer readable medium selected from the set of a disk, tape or other magnetic, optical or electronic storage medium.

59. (*New*) The computer program product of claim 54, at least transiently encoded in connection with transmission via a network, wire line, wireless or other communications medium.

60. (*New*) A method of securely conveying private information from a sender to a recipient using a push-oriented messaging system, the method comprising:

- receiving from the sender both the private information and at least one criterion for use in authenticating identity of the recipient if the recipient has not previously been enrolled in the messaging system;
- transmitting a first message to the recipient, the first message including a recipient-specific resource locator; and
- in a session initiated by the recipient using the recipient-specific resource locator, authenticating identity of the recipient and thereafter supplying the private information to the recipient.

61. (*New*) The method of claim 60, further comprising:

- transmitting a second message that verifies enrollment of the recipient and includes a second resource locator by which the recipient may retrieve the private information.